DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 107 636 SP 009 261

AUTHOR Corbin, Charles B.
TITLE Attitudes Toward Physical Activity of Champion Women Basketball Players.
PUB DATE Apr 75
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented to the research section of the Central District Meeting of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (Kansas City, Kansas, April 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Athletes; *Athletics; *Attitudes; Attitude Tests; Catharsis; Exercise (Physiology); Females; Motivation; *Physical Activities; Physical Fitness; Self Control; *Womens Athletics
IDENTIFIERS *Basketball

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to determine which attitudes were central to the motivation of women involved in championship basketball competition. Seventy-five women members of teams represented in national basketball championships served as subjects for this experiment. In addition, a control group of 212 women was randomly selected from physical education classes required of all first-year students at Kansas State University. All subjects were administered the Kenyon Attitude Toward Physical Activity Scale. This scale includes the following six subdomains: (a) social experience, (b) health and fitness, (c) pursuit of vertigo, (d) aesthetic experience, (e) catharsis, and (f) ascetic experience. Information was also obtained on the player's position on the team, her classification as starting or reserve, and her team's rating. The strongest motive for participation expressed by the athletes was the ascetic. The aesthetic experience was least dominant. Athletes differed from nonathletes on the ascetic, aesthetic, and catharsis subscales. The most striking difference was in ascetic attitudes, where athletes had a much higher score. Athletes also scored higher on the catharsis scale. The only scale on which nonathletes scored higher than athletes was the aesthetic scale. There were no significant differences in attitude when position, classification, and rating were considered. (PB)

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED107636

A paper presented to the research section of the Central District AAHPER Convention, Kansas City April 1975.

ATTITUDES TOWARD PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OF CHAMPION WOMEN BASKETBALL PLAYERS*

CHARLES B. CORBIN,** U.S.A.

In a recent presentation to an international physical education conference Jernigan (4) outlined research needs for girls and women in sport. Like others in recent years, she acknowledged the increasing role played by woman in sport. Jernigan suggested that certain critical questions were especially in need of answers. Two of five major questions were: "What motivates a girl to start sport?" and "What motivates her to stay involved?"

Purpose

This study was undertaken to determine which attitudes were central to the motivation of women involved in championship basketball competition. It was hoped that the research findings might begin to answer some of the questions raised by Jernigan concerning the woman athlete's motives for sports participation. Specifically, it was the purpose of the study:

1. To determine which of six attitudinal subdomains best characterized the woman athlete's motivation for basketball participation.

2. To determine if attitudes toward physical activity of women champion basketball players differ from those of nonathletic college women.

* Appreciation is extended to the research committee of the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women for sanctioning this research and for aiding the researcher in collection data.

** Professor and Head, Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506

SP009 261

3. To determine if differences existed between players according to position on the team, status on the team, or team rating when attitudes toward physical activity of specific groups of athletes were compared.

Review of the Literature

Considerable recent research has been conducted to assess the personality traits of women athletes (5) (9) (10) (12). This research has followed the precedent set during the 1960's when the personalities of male athletes,as assessed by personality questionnaire,were analyzed in detail. Mushier (9) acknowledges in her study of personality characteristics of women lacross players, that while a personality "type for lacross" is identifiable, this "type" cannot be generalized to all girls and women in sports. In her review of literature she notes that there is difficulty in making comparisons from sport to sport and from one personality instrument to another. Other studies support this general contention, but do indicate that there are personality differences which are characteristic of persons in specific sports (5) (12).

Studies relating to attitudes toward physical activity of women athletes are not as numerous as those studying the personality of athletes. Bout (2) has outlined various motives which account for sports participation. Kenyon (8) has likewise developed a conceptual model for characterizing attitudes toward physical activity. Both suggest that there are multiple motives for sports participation. Recently Kenyon (6) (7) has developed a multi-scale instrument for assessing six of the motives for sports participation.

Using this instrument Dotson (3) analyzed the attitudes toward physical activity of men participating in various sports and concluded that "...achievement in athletics was most highly related to the perceived value of physical activity as an ascetic experience." Straub (4) has shown that attitudes toward physical activity of delinquents is lower than those of nondelinquent girls. Finally, Alderman (1) has shown that men and women athletes have similar attitudes toward physical activity. For both men and women activity as an aesthetic experience was the strongest motive for participation, with activity as an ascetic experience being the weakest. Beyond this, little research has been conducted using multi-factored instruments for assessing the attitudes toward physical activity of women athletes.

Method

Seventy-five women athletes who were members of teams represented in the AIAW National Basketball Championships served as subjects for the investigation. In addition a control group of two hundred twelve college freshmen women served as subjects. These women were randomly selected from classes of physical education required of all freshmen at Kansas State University. All subjects were administered form DW of the Kenyon Attitude Toward Physical Activity Scale (7). Scores were obtained on each of the six subdomains of the attitude scale. A summary of the instrument is included in Table 1. The scale consisted of 54 statements which were scored by each subject on a seven point Likert scale. Responses ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Exact scoring details are available (7).

TABLE 1. Six Scales for Assessing Attitude Toward Physical Activity--

A Summary (6) (7).

Name of Scale	Number of Items	Scale Reliability	Model for Each Scale
Social Experience	8	.68-.72	Characterizes attitudes of persons...."whose primary purpose (for participation in activity) is to provide a medium for social intercourse.
Health and Fitness	11	.83	Characterizes attitudes of persons whose primary purpose for participating in physical activity is..."to improve one's health and fitness."
Pursuit of Vertigo	9	.86	Characterizes attitudes of persons whose primary purpose for participating in physical activity is to find an "element of thrill"...or..."exposure to danger...."
Aesthetic Experience	9	.87	Characterizes attitude of persons whose primary purpose for participating in physical activity is to find... "beauty and certain artistic qualities" in the activity.
Catharsis	9	.79	Characterizes attitudes of persons whose primary purpose for participation in physical activity is to find...."a release of tension precipitated by frustration..."
Ascetic Experience	8	.74-.78	Characterizes attitudes of persons whose primary purpose for participating in physical activity is to find satisfaction from..."long strenuous and painful learning and stiff competition."

The attitude instrument was distributed to team coaches at the AIAW national basketball tournament. The coaches administered the instrument to the women athletes. In addition the following information was obtained for each athlete: (a) position on the team (guard, forward, center); (b) classification (starter or reserve); and (c) rating (member of team finishing in top 4, middle 4, or lower 8).

Each of the control group subjects was administered the ATPA instrument by a member of the staff of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Kansas State University during a regular class period.

Data were analyzed using raw scores on each of the six scales as well as using the average per item response for each of the six scales. The analysis of variance, the t test, and the Scheffe test for comparison of multiple means were used to treat the data.

Results

As can be seen in Table 1 each of the subscales of the ATPA has a different number of items. Therefore, the raw scores of the subscales could not be used to compare athletes on their attitudes toward physical activity. To make the comparison possible, an average, per item response, was calculated for each athlete for each ATPA subscale. For example, if the raw score for the Social subscale was 34, the per item score was 4.25 since there are eight items in the Social subscale ($\frac{34}{8} = 4.25$). The results of an analysis of variance comparing the mean per item subscale responses for all athletes is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Analysis of Variance Summary Table Differences in Per Item Attitude Scores on ATPA Subscales

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Attitude	5	69.0938	13.8187	22.282*
Within	444	275.3550	0.6202	—
Total	449	344.4492		

* significant at the .05 level

Since the F was significant at the .05 level a Scheffe Test was calculated to determine between which means differences existed. These results are presented in Table 3.

As can be seen in Table 3 the strongest motive for participantion expressed by the women athletes was the Ascetic. These championship athletes chose to participate principally because of their desire to ..."find satisfaction from long, strenuous and painful training and stiff competition." Contrary to the oft expressed notion that women do not have the "competitive" spirit, this ascetic attitude was far more pronounced than the aesthetic or social attitudes frequently attributed to women. In fact, the aesthetic experience was the least dominant of the expressed attitudes of the women athletes.

To compare the attitudes of the athletes to nonathlete college women, the t test technique was used. Results are presented in Table 4.

As can be seen in Table 4 the athletes differed from nonathletes on the Ascetic, Aesthetic, and the Catharsis subscales. Most striking is the differences in the ascetic attitude. The nonathletic women had a mean score quite similar to those in Kenyon's original sample. The athletes were a full 10 points higher. Both athletes and nonathletes had higher mean scores on the catharsis subscale than did Kenyon's original sample but the athletes had significantly higher scores than did nonathletes.

On only one scale did nonathletes have higher scores than athletes, that was the aesthetic subscale. The athletes had mean scores equal to those of Kenyon's sample but significantly lower than the Kansas State nonathlete sample. The finding tends to disagree with that of Alderman (1)

TABLE 3. Scheffe Summary Table--Per Item Means for Attitude Toward Physical Activity Subscales

Aesthetic	Pursuit of Vertigo	Health and Physical Fitness	Social	Catharsis	Ascetic
3.9259	4.3007	4.5636	4.6683	4.7229	5.2032

* underlined means are statistically the same at the .05 level of significance.

TABLE 4. "t" Test Summary Table--Subscale Means of Athletes Compared to Nonathletes.

Subscale	Athletes	Nonathletes	t value	Original Kenyon Norms
Social	36.96	35.65	1.67	(32.0-34.0)
Health and Fitness	50.52	49.17	1.39	(44.3-45.4)
Pursuit of Vertigo	39.05	37.02	1.90	(36.6-37.4)
Aesthetic	35.23	39.55	-4.50*	(35.1-36.7)
Catharsis	42.83	40.75	2.28*	(35.1-36.7)
Ascetic	41.70	31.56	12.23*	(31.2-31.5)

*significant at .05 level

Scores in parenthesis are mean scores for Kenyon's original test sample and are not included in the statistical analysis (6) (7).

who suggests the aesthetic to be the dominant attitude toward physical activity of women athletes. Clearly in this study the ascetic and catharsis attitudes are dominant among women athletes.

Statistical analyses yielded no significant differences in attitude between player having different position on any of the six subscales. Neither were there any differences in attitudes between starting players and reserves, or players who represented winning vs. losing teams in the tournament.

Conclusions

While no generalization can be made from this study regarding attitudes of all women in sport, the results of this study clearly indicate that championship women basketball players are motivated to participate in physical activity for catharsis and ascetic reasons. These women have an apparent desire for rigorous training and competition which is much stronger than that of the nonathlete woman. In addition, these women athletes seek emotional release from their participation in activity.

Certainly, as Mushier (9) points out, participants in different sports probably have different characteristics. However, the woman basketball player clearly participates in activity for reasons other than the reasons commonly attributed to women. In fact the stereotypical attitudes commonly associated with women, namely social and aesthetic, were not dominant attitudes expressed by women basketball players.

SUMMARY

The purpose of the study was to assess the attitudes toward physical activity of championship athletes and nonathlete college women. The Kenyon's ATPA scale was administered to 75 athletes participating in the National AIAW Basketball Championships and 212 college freshmen women randomly selected from required physical education classes at Kansas State University. Results of statistical analyses indicated that women basketball players had significantly higher attitude scores on the ascetic attitude subscale than on any of the other five subscales. Athletes scored higher on catharsis and ascetic subscales than did the nonathlete while the nonathletes had significantly higher scores on the aesthetic subscale than did the athletes.

REFERENCES

1. Alderman, R.B. A sociopsychological assessment of attitudes toward physical activity of champion athletes. Research Quarterly. 41, 1-9, 1970.

2. Bout, M. Les Motivations des Sportifs. Editions Universitaires, 1969, as abstracted in International Journal of Sport Psychology. 2, 64-65, 1971.

3. Dotson, C.O. and Stanley, W.J. Values of physical activity perceived by male university students. Research Quarterly. 43: 148-156, 1972.

4. Jernigan, S.S. Research needs in girls and women's sports. A paper presented to the International Council on Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, Kingston, Jamaica, July 30-August 1, 1971.

5. Johnson, P.A. A comparison of personality traits of superior skilled women athletes in basketball, bowling, field hockey, and golf. Research Quarterly. 43:409-415, 1972.

6. Kenyon, G.S. Six scales for assessing attitudes toward physical activity. Research Quarterly. 39:566-574, 1968.

7. Kenyon, G.S. Six scales for assessing attitudes toward physical activity. Document number 9983, ADI Auxiliary Publications Project, Photoduplication Service, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

8. Kenyon, G.S. A conceptual model for characterizing physical activity. from Loy, J.W. and Kenyon, G.S. Sport Culture and Society. New York: MacMillan, 1969, pp. 71-81.

9. Mushier, C.L. Personality and selected women athletes: a cross sectional study. Internationl Journal of Sport Psychology. 3:25-31, 1972.

10. Slaughter, M. An analysis of the relationship between somatotype and personality traits of college women. Research Quarterly. 41:569-575, 1970.

11. Straub, W.F. and Felvek, T. Attitudes toward physical activity of delinquent and nondelinquent junior high school age girls. Research Quarterly. 45:21-27, 1974.

12. Williams, J.M., Hoepner, B.J., Moody, D.L., and Ogilvie, B.C. Personality traits of champion level female fencers. Research Quarterly. 41:446-453, 1970.